



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

HFA-305

Food and Drug Administration
Rockville MD 20857

February 23, 2005

The Honorable Ernest J. Istook, Jr.
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Istook:

Thank you for your letter to Tommy Thompson, former Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, concerning a petition to establish the descriptive claims "excellent source," "good source," and "made with" for whole grain content of foods. The Office of the Secretary has asked that I respond to your letter.

You stated that the Food and Drug Administration's approval of the petition would be wholly consistent with the goal of HHS to work towards a healthier America and with FDA's Consumer Health Information for Better Nutrition Initiative. The petition, received on May 11, 2004, is currently under review at FDA's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition.

As you may know, FDA and the U.S. Department of Agriculture developed the *2000 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* and the *Food Guide Pyramid*, which contain guidelines for increased consumption of whole grain foods. HHS remains committed to the goal of making available to consumers more and better information about the health benefits of foods. We appreciate your support and commitment to working with us towards a healthier America. Your letter has been forwarded to FDA's Dockets Management Branch to be included as a comment to the petition on whole grain content claims.

Thank you again for contacting us concerning this matter. Please call me if you have any further thoughts or questions.

Sincerely,

Lester M. Crawford, D.V.M., Ph.D.
Acting Commissioner of Food and Drugs

2004P-0223

CIS/ANS

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House of Representatives
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December 23, 2004

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The Honorable Tommy G. Thompson
Secretary of Health and Human Services
United States Department of Health and Human Services
Hubert H. Humphrey Building
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Re: Docket No. 2004P-0223/CP 1

Dear Secretary Thompson:

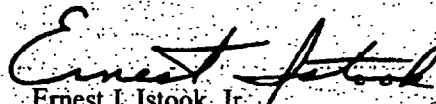
I am writing to respectfully urge the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to approve a petition currently pending before the FDA that would establish the descriptive claims "excellent source," "good source," and "made with" for whole grain content under the Agency's authority to prevent false and misleading food labeling statements (Docket No. 2004P-0223/CP 1). I believe that FDA approval of this petition would be wholly consistent with your stated goal of working towards a healthier America.

There is a clear consensus that Americans can improve their diet by eating more foods that contain whole grains. Further, there are studies that indicate that consumers are eager for messages about nutrition and health and believe whole grains contain important nutritional qualities. Notwithstanding this, actual consumption of whole grains is well below the recommended daily intake. I believe that this is because consumers remain (understandably) uncertain as to what actually constitutes a "whole grain" product. I believe that this petition would go a long way towards clearing up that confusion and, most likely, will encourage consumption of more whole grain foods.

Secretary Thompson, I appreciate all of the efforts of your Department as you work toward a healthier America. Action on this petition would be a strong step in that direction. I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Very truly yours,


Ernest J. Istook, Jr.
Member of Congress

cc:

The Honorable Lester Crawford, D.V.M. Ph.D.
Robert E. Brackett, Ph.D.

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